

Hence the best plan was to go to running water. Once more, important but unanticipated and even unperceived consequences followed. The customs played the part of sanitary regulations.

When it became the custom to retire it became indecent not to retire. Then it became a tradition from ancestors that one always must retire, and the ghosts would be angry if this rule

was not observed. It was disrespectful to them, and would

offend them to expose the body or not to retire. The Greeks

said that it offended the gods.

In the books of Moses the sanc-

tion for all the rules of decency is, " For it is an abomination

unto the Lord." That is only an expression of the disapproval

in the mores which God also was supposed to feel.

453. What functions should be concealed ? What is the limit

of the bodily functions to be concealed ? A member of the Jew-

ish sect of the Essenes, who were all celibate men, always wore

an apron, even when alone in the bath. The genitals were impure

and must not be uncovered to the eye of God. The same sect had

elaborate rules like those in Deut. xxiii. 12 ff. When the Medes

elected Deioces king he made a rule that no one

should laugh
 or spit in his presence.¹ The
 Zulu king Chaka punished
 with
 death sneezing or clearing
 the throat in his presence.² At
 Bag-
 dad, in the tenth century, the
 court of the caliphs had
 become
 luxurious, and a very severe
 and minute etiquette had
 been
 introduced. It was forbidden
 to spit, clear the throat or
 nose,
 gape, or sneeze in the
 presence of the sovereign.
 The nobles
 imitated this etiquette and
 adopted rules to regulate
 salutations,
 entrance into company,
 reception of visitors, table
 manners,
 and approach to one's wife. "
 If any one refused to conform
 to
 this etiquette, he exposed
 himself to universal blame as
 an
 eccentric person, or even as
 an enemy of Islam." ³ In the
 Italian
 novel *Niccolo dei Lapi* it is
 said in honor of the heroine
 that she
 never saw herself nude. It
 was a custom observed by
 many to
 wear a garment which
 covered the whole body even
 when alone
 in the bath. Erasmus gives
 the reason for this. The
 angels
 would be shocked at
 nakedness. He made it a
 rule for men.

¹ Herodotus, I, 100.

² Ratzel, *Hist. of Mankind* II, 444.

³ Von Kremer, *JCulturgesch.
des Orients*, II, 247, 250,
269.